

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

The Final Office Action mailed February 20, 2004 has been reviewed and carefully considered. Claims 1-20 are pending, with Claims 1, 3, and 18 being in independent form. Claims 1, 3, 5, 6, 8, 12, 16, and 18 have been amended in response to the Examiner's objections and 35 USC §112 rejections. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the objections and rejections are requested on the basis of the foregoing amendments and the following remarks.

In the Final Office Action, the Examiner objected to various informalities. It is believed the current amendments have obviated these objections, whose withdrawal is respectfully requested.

In the Final Office Action, the Examiner rejected Claims 12 and 13 under 35 USC §112, first paragraph, as lacking support in the specification as originally filed. In response, Claim 12 has been amended: its current wording is supported by the text at lines 26-28 of page 5 of the originally filed specification. Claim 13 was not amended, as its wording is supported by the text at lines 5-7 of page 6 of the originally filed specification (which was noted in our October 29, 2003 Amendment). Withdrawal of the rejection is respectfully requested.

In the Final Office Action, the Examiner rejected Claims 12 and 16 under 35 USC §112, second paragraph, as indefinite. It is believed the amendment of Claim 12 obviates this rejection. Claim 16 has been rewritten to clearly recite the different portions of ceramic material. Withdrawal of the rejection is respectfully requested.

In the Final Office Action, the Examiner rejected Claims 1, 3, and 10-12 under 35 USC §102(e) as anticipated by *Elco* (US 6,590,477), Claims 2, 4-6, and 14 under 35 USC §103(a) as obvious over *Elco* in view of *Kyocera* (EP App. No. 883 328), and Claim 7 under 35 USC §103(a) as obvious over *Elco* in view of *King* (US 2,232,179).

Elco, which is used in every §102 and §103 rejection, is a new reference which the Examiner found in order to overcome the amendments and arguments in our 29 October 2003 Amendment. However, because the present application is the national stage of an international stage PCT application which made a proper claim of priority to Finnish Patent Application Serial No. 991585, which was filed on 9 July 1999, the present application can antedate *Elco*, which was filed on 29 October 1999, by perfecting its claim of priority under 35 USC §119(a) (see 37

CFR §1.55(a)(2) and (a)(4), and MPEP §706.02(b)). In order to perfect the claim of priority, a certified copy of the priority document must be filed along with an English language translation, if the priority document is not in English, and a statement that the English language translation of the certified copy is accurate (37 CFR §1.55(a)(4)). Because this is a national stage of an International PCT application, the International Bureau is charged with forwarding the certified copy to the PTO (see MPEP §1895.01(I)(C)). In this case, the PTO has already indicated that they received such a certified copy both in their Notification of Missing Requirements dated 1 April 2002 and in the Summary sheet of the previous Office Action (i.e., box 12 is checked).

However, just to insure that there are no possible problems, applicants are providing *another* certified copy of the original Finnish patent application, as well as an English translation of said Finnish application, with a signed statement that the English translation of the certified copy is accurate. These documents are being submitted with this Amendment.

Therefore, since *Elco* is not prior art to the present application, *Elco* can not be used in either a §102 or a §103 rejection. Withdrawal of all §102 and §103 rejections based on *Elco* is respectfully requested.

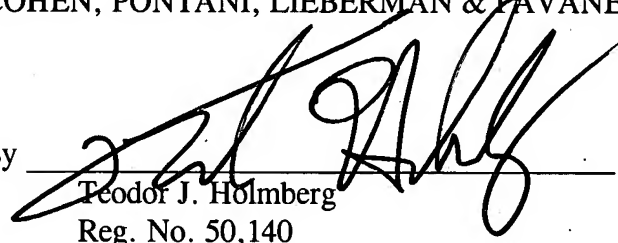
In the Final Office Action, the Examiner allowed independent Claim 18, and Claims 19-20 depending therefrom, and indicated that dependent Claims 8, 9, 15, and 17 would be allowed if rewritten as independent claims (with all the limitations of their base claim and any intervening claims). Applicants thank the Examiner. Since presently pending independent Claim 1 is in condition for allowance, there is no need to amend any of dependent Claims 8, 9, 15, and 17.

Since all of the rejections and objections have been obviated in the present Amendment, applicants respectfully request that the Examiner withdraw his Final Rejection, and allow all the presently pending claims.

Respectfully submitted,

COHEN, PONTANI, LIEBERMAN & PAVANE

By

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Teodor J. Holmberg', is written over a horizontal line.

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